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ABSTRACT

This document summarizes discussions at an invitational workshop on the role of culture in development in Nigeria. The discussion centered on encouraging those elements of traditional African culture that contribute to the national development and on identifying a national Nigerian culture. The following broad topics were discussed: (1) the multiple subcultures that contribute to the national Nigerian culture; (2) the common subcultural characteristics that comprise the national identity; (3) the effects of culture on national development and the role of government in encouraging those cultural characteristics that promote development; (4) the need for public institutions to embody the social values of hospitality, politeness, warmth, and courtesy; (5) the need to accurately represent the national culture in textbooks and the mass media; and (6) the need to assume an international leadership role in the articulation and promotion of African culture. A list of participants, the text of the two introductory addresses, and a description of the Africa Leadership Forum are appended. (FMW)

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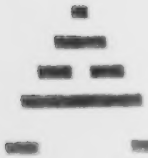

AFRICA LEADERSHIP FORUM

ED325553

FARM HOUSE DIALOGUE

Culture and Development

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Dialogue II

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FARM HOUSE DIALOGUE -

PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

The Dialogue is neither a political gathering nor is it a gathering to chastise and condemn. It is basically a brainstorming event. Everyone is at liberty to freely express his or her opinions.

It is a concerned attempt to search for solutions to national problems through discussion. It does not seek to delve into who brought about particular predicament of the nation. Although a knowledge of how the nation got to a specific impasse or difficult situation might provide useful lessons for the future.

It, instead, is an attempt to engage in a proper analysis of national problems and arrive through discussions and dialogue at practical suggestions and recommendations which may help in resolving all or part of these problems.

In consequence, the Dialogue places great emphasis on the selection of individuals to participate in the discussions, noting the importance of inviting always personalities who have knowledge and insights into the particular national issues being discussed and who can make substantial contributions.

It is aimed not always to reach consensus but to provide opportunity for recording honest disagreements on vital national issues.

Each Dialogue will result in a publication that will capture the essence of the discussion and the main conclusions reached.

FARM HOUSE DIALOGUE

Dialogue 8

CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

Chairman: Prof Saburi Biobaku
Rapporteur: Prof. Alfred Opubor
Editor : Prof. A. L. Mabogunje

Introduction

The eighth Farm House Dialogue took place as usual at Obasanjo Farms in Ota from the 2nd to the 4th of February, 1990. General Olusegun Obasanjo as Chairman, Africa Leadership Forum and chief host delivered an opening address. In the address he remarked inter alia that as a nation and a people, Nigerians cannot honestly expect to pick up the gauntlet of development challenges of the 20th and 21st century with the attitude, belief, mental disposition and pre-dedication of a stone age era.

He further remarked that it was essential for participants to examine and possibly identify the common strands that would enable us characterize the cultural plurality in Nigeria with a view to ascertaining with clarity those elements that were predisposing to progress and development. He observed that since the introduction of the Farm House Dialogue on the Development Series, culture has remained a recurrent theme throughout the discussions, thus attesting to the centrality of the issue to the development question. He concluded

his remarks by thanking the dialogue Chairman, Professor Saburi Biobaku and reminded participants of the frank and non-attributory nature of the report of the deliberations. (See Annexure II for full text).

Professor Biobaku followed up the General's opening address with a short introductory welcome address. He drew specific attention to the all important question of whether the maintenance of our culture is relevant to our goal of national development.

He further remarked that we need cultural indentity as Nigerians and

Africans to contribute effectively to the amalgam of world culture. (see Annexure III for full text).

With the two addresses setting the scene participants agreed to focus discussions around the following sub-topics and issue areas:

1. Definition of Culture; its paraphenalias and dimensions.
2. A working definition of Development.
3. Culture in the Nigerian context.
   a. What Nigerian values are conducive to development.
   b. Elements of the Nigerian culture.
   c. Who is a cultured Nigerian?
   d. Culture as it relates to development.
4. The State, Culture and Development.
5. Propagation of Culture.
6. Cultural Identity and Nationalism.

DEFINING CULTURE; ITS PARAMETERS AND DIMENSIONS

While acknowledging the fact that "Culture" can mean so many different things, participants agreed on the need for a working definition. They decided on the following formulation, drawing largely on the definition of culture as articulated in the booklet *Cultural Policy For*

Nigeria, published by the Federal Department of Culture. This definition states that:

> "Culture is the totality of the way of life evolved by a people in their attempts to meet the challenges of living in their environment."

Following on this definition, the Dialogue observed that culture gives order and meaning to the social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious norms and modes of organization of a people thus distinguishing them from their neighbours. It comprises material, institutional, philosophical and creative aspects. The material aspect has to do with artefacts in their broadest form (namely: tools, clothing, food, medicine, utensils, housing, etc.); the institutional deals with the political, social, legal and economic objectives; while the philosophical is concerned with ideas, beliefs and values; the creative concerns a people's innovativeness in literature (oral or written) their visual and performing arts and their scientific and technological endeavours. Culture also relates to the values of a society in terms of their conception of what is right or wrong (moral values), what is good or bad (ethical values), what is ugly or beautiful (aesthetic values).

Culture is not merely a return to the customs of the past. It embodies the attitude of a people to the future of their traditional values faced with the demands of modern technology which is an essential factor of development and progress. When we talk therefore of self-reliance, self-sufficiency and a national development objectives, we are referring to culture as the fountain spring, or the informing spirit of driving force of all policies whether educational, social, political or economic. The strategies of national development would thus depend on the understanding of the culture, the adaptation of its elements for political, educational and economic development, as well as its strengths for social integration and development.

It was pointed out that culture has universalistic and particularistic dimensions which should be taken into account in considering the implications of the accepted definition.

CULTURE IN THE NIGERIAN CONTEXT

Participants at the dialogue took due cognizance of the multi- cultural nature and base of the Nigerian nation. They noted that this situation presents special problems particularly when it is remembered that even within supposedly homogeneous cultural setting there are basic contradictions and conflicts. It was however observed that in spite of this it was still possible to identify common strands that could enable one to talk of a cultural unity within the nation.

Participants observed that while ethnicity might be seen as germane to the understanding of the emergence of a culture, the role of economic development especially in the evolution of a national culture was of equal significance. For instance, the mode of production in Nigeria has changed and has affected the social relations of productions across the nation. The emergent culture, has been broad-based and meant that the role of ethnicity in social relations is more or less vertical in the diverse Nigerian cultures.

Development and the emergence of cultural homogeneity it was agreed, was usually a function of power relations. The process of national integration compels the cultivationsof a better and more united cultural stance. In the Nigerian context, forces making for such integration include common legislative and political processes, education, inter-regional trade and labour movements as well as the National Youth Service Corps Scheme. The negative effects of the multi-cultural setting, however, persisit in some anti-social and anti-national attitudinal dispositions in circumstances of interaction and inter-facing

among the various sub-cultures as well as in the difficulty of evolving national norms of behaviour especially in public life.

In order to promote the emergence of a national culture Nigerians should encourage the development and transformation of various sub-cultures. Encouragement should be given to more people to produce books about different aspects of their sub-cultures as a first step towards identifying strands relevant to the emergence of a common collective cultural identity. Governments, both at Federal, State and local level should sponsor publications in particular areas of need, but should refrain from engaging in the publication of these books. Publication of such materials, it was felt, should be left in private hands.

As a corrolary, participants suggested that the government should ensure that such books are used in educational institutions as part of the curricula. In addition participants reasoned that for now the country requires a national textbook policy. School textbooks should be written from essentially a national point of view. Attempts must be made through such textbooks to debunk old, colonial and racist fallacies and stereotypes about our culture and practices.

The current content of the nursery education, for instance, shows the domination of foreign-oriented rhymes and songs, stories and incidents which tend to aggravate the cultural bleaching of our children. Since this constitutes the child's first contact with the education world, there was the urgent need to review the content of material used in nursery education to make them more culturally relevant. For added measure, an industry should be created to introduce our children to their environment through culturally-appropriate toys.

As a further step towards solidifying the goals of a culturally united and informed Nigeria, efforts should be made to go beyond the writing of books. Other modes of cultural transmission such as film mak-

ing, and video production should be made available to serve as means of communicating more subtle, visual and non- visual aspects of our culture.

The dialogue also suggested that educational materials should be creatively packaged to ensure their attractiveness for young readers. They should be entertaining as well as informative.

The effect of changes in educational policy on textbooks should be closely monitored to ensure that the presentation of cultural material is not compromised as was often the case in the past. While agreeing that all of us are passive producers of culture in one form or the other, participants suggested that to aid the cultural development of the Nigerian nation, a mechanism should be established to assist the producers of cultural material and artefacts.

The dialogue was of the opinion that information management in Nigeria as currently practiced is loose, unselective, unrestrictive and admits of all shades of influence. It was crucial that positive actions should be taken to defend our youths against unfavourable foreign influences through re- orientation of our educational system. Such a re-orientation should be geared towards the sensitisation of our youths to the more positive aspects of the Nigerian culture.

At the moment, the issue of a national lingua-franca was regarded as both fruitless and time wasting because the English language provided a convenient means of communication among the differing the constituent members of the Nigerian polity.

Besides English is widely spoken internationally and for that reason the language has its own advantages and conveniences. The important point is therefore to intensify efforts to accelerate broad based education of Nigerians, both of the young and the adults. At the same

time, the provisions of the national language policy whereby children are meant to be taught at least one of the major Nigerian languages other their own should be implemented with greater vigour. Plans to allow the business of the legislature under democratic system to be conducted in the main Nigerian languages if vigorously pursued, should also help in this matter. The consensus of opinion was that wiping out illiteracy as quickly as possible would be a major step towards achieving one of the principal goals of the national language policy.

Participants agreed that although a Nigerian culture was still in the making, some of its basic characteristics are already becoming clearly identifiable. These include:

a. Self assertiveness;
b. Commitment to free expression and a free press;
c. Abhorrence of oppression;
d. Love of freedom;
e. Respect for elder;
f. Hospitality;
g. Sharing and caring and the personification of the adage of being one's brother's keeper; and
h. Appreciation of the positive values of the extended family system.

On the basis of the above, the dialogue observed that a cultured Nigerian is:

- a person deeply-rooted in his own sub-culture who appreciates and respects the cultures of other Nigerians;
- a person who consciously behaves and operates in a manner acceptable as decent by the generality of Nigerians; and
- a person who is fully aware of and appreciates our national cultural heritage, appreciates our music, dances, arts, etc.

CULTURE AS IT RELATES TO DEVELOPMENT

In examining how culture relates to development participants began by reviewing the cultural terrain of the Nigerian nation and concluded that certain cultural practices and attitudinal disposition when enhanced and allowed to thrive are best suited to the development process. These include sincerity/honesty, selflessness, sensitivity, hardwork, frugality, (leading to savings), moderation, sense of belonging, peaceful co-existence, respect for the rule of law, respect for fundamental human rights, self help, co-operation, hospitality, tolerance, freedom, patriotism, self confidence and inventiveness.

Conversely some negative values and practices were identified as inimical to the growth and overall development of the society. These include, greed, subservience, lawlessness,indiscipline, indolence, intolerance, fraudulence, cheating, god-fatherism, child abuse and instability of the family institution.

The Nigerian love of freedom it was pointed out was attributable to our historical experience. For instance, the Nigerian colonial experience was not particularly oppressive and since independence, Nigeria has been lucky not to have had any really oppressive regimes. The national value must, however be seen as requiring eternal vigilance. It must be constantly reinforced and not allowed to diminish in intensity and growth.

Other cultural practices such as the modes of socio-political organization also need to be carefully fine-tuned to create a congenial atmosphere for development. Of particular significance is the element of democratic governance. In the opinion of participants, it is inconceivable to talk of participatory governance without a commitment to democracy and to popular access to the institutions of governance.

There is therefore an urgent need to promote those elements of the Nigerian culture that enhance the development and flowering of a strong tradition of democratic governance.

Certain accepted cultural practices were also identified as basically dysfunctional for the development and growth of the Nigerian nation. These include the popular culture of pleading, of trying to shield individuals form the consequences of their actions. While noting, for instance, that even in law, pleading is allowed, participants frowned at the general pervasiveness of a practice which is eventually to undermine discipline and encourage thoughtlessness. It was agreed that the culture of pleading is essentially inconsistent and incompatible with modern day management practice and efforts should be made to discourage and stamp it out in all areas of national life.

In a similar vein participants decried the culture of pilfering which has almost become a cankerworm in the industries, banking, agricultural and other sub-sectors of the Nigerian economic life. Cheating, shirking work, bribery and corruption of all types have been elevated to the status of a social norm in Nigerian business world. The pervasiveness of these negative practices seemed to have been the products of the serious socio political dislocation and disarticulation arising from the civil war and the oil boom. Regardless of this, participants were of the opinion that drastic steps should be taken to contain this development. The Nigerian legal system and law enforcement agencies should be made more sensitive and effective in countering these anti-developmental values and practices.

The dialogue further observed that it is indeed a shame that over the years Nigeria had not built a thriving film industry. The first positive step in this direction must include the provision by government of needed incentives to enterprising young men currently striving to develop a Nigerian film industry. Nevertheless, it was emphasised that a

Nigerian film industry must be based on our culture and the films must be made to project and reinforce positive cultural values. On the general issue of culture as it relates to Development, the dialogue concluded with the following recommendations:

a. The state should provide the necessary policy climate and incentives to encourage cultural production.
b. The development of science and technology should go hand in hand with humanistic studies in our educational institutions.
c. The role of the family in sustaining the values necessary for development should continuously be emphasized;
d. A climate should be created which would encourage people to make things work and to participate in making things happen;
e. The right to be consulted and striving towards consensus.
f. Women should be further assisted through government patronage as well as national shopping centres to stock and sell cultural artefacts.
g. Our film industry should be developed in a manner to encourage creative expression of our best cultural values both for local and foreign consumption.
h. Young and enterprising film makers should be given access to funding and technical resources as a matter of public policy.

STATE, CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

The consensus of opinion at the dialogue was that the nature and formation of the Nigerian cultural super-structure has tremendous and over-arching influence on the sort of cultural policies that tend to shape and direct national development. The Nigerian state, it was argued, must strive to perpetuate those values and virtues that Nigerians have come to accept. The noticeable incongruity between the manner of operations of state institutions and our established practice need to

be consciously obviated. Virtually all of these institutions have over the years failed to reflect social aspects of our cultural life as hospitality, politeness, warmth and courteous reception of people. The consequence, has been, a situation wherein civil servants and other state officials have become "civil masters". Institutions under such civil servants have become associated with insensitivity, bossiness, uncaring attitude and insincerity. On the basis of the above discussions participants suggested that

a. Support should be given to actions by the leadership to make governance through public institutions better aligned with our cultural values such as those of hospitality, respect and sensitivity.
b. The state must show greater interest in the development of our human resources and foster more opportunities for re-training of workers.
c. The state should consciously promote a reading culture;
d. Libraries should be established at different levels of government including the community level.
e. Schools should be encouraged to give books rather than cash as prizes in recognition of good performance by students;
f. Government should obtain better statistics and information about demands for public services so that adequate provisions can be made to avoid one of the major causes of subverting positive cultural values in public institutions;
g. States should review obsolete ordinances that have negative impact our culture.

PROPAGATION OF THE NIGERIAN CULTURE

The propagation of the Nigerian culture is an imperative for our development process. For this reason, the Dialogue was dismayed that past cultural shows in Nigeria have more often than not tended to give a narrow picture of the Nigerian culture. These shows give very little indications of other aspects of the nation's culture especially in literary

arts, technological and scientific inventions. Clearly, a broader spectrum of culture is required to produce a more enhancing picture of the country.

The educational system, is a powerful means of propagating and transmitting culture. For this reason, there is a strong need to check the use of negative images about the nation as often contained in some of the books recommended in our school curricula. Indeed effort should be made deliberately to encourage the production of books that paint a more positive, dignifying and enhancing image of the Nigerian peoples.. It was therefore recommended that in place of European literature, literature from the Carribeans in addition to Nigerian literature should be adopted as the main texts in school curricula.

Over the years, the Nigerian government has been engaged in signing cultural agreements with one country after another. Such cultural agreements often included programmes for the exchange of films and other cultural materials. Unfortunately, the money to actualize many of these programme has often been in short supply. Besides, private organizations which could have filled the gap + arising from public sector inadequacy, have in the past been denied access to materials capable of promoting and helping to propagate the Nigerian culture outside the country. The dialogue therefore recommended that greater attention should be paid to joint effort by government and private organisations to disseminate abroad well articalated programmes about Nigerian culture.

With respect to local propagation of Nigerian culture, participants observed that village square was a manufacturing point for culture. Over the years, the role of such centres as a source for the spontaneous production of culture would seem to have been neglected. The consequence was that the urban areas and the modernization process were being allowed to surreptitiously regress the propagation of the Nige-

rian culture. Consequently, it was suggested that a return to the village square as an authentic forum and setting for the true propagation of our culture should be strongly encouraged.

As part of a joint and collective effort at propagating Nigerian culture, participants recommended as follows:

a. that existing cultural institutions should be adequately funded.
b. that all government institutions should accord high priority to cultural activities as a means also of increasing their economic viability.
c. that government should institute policies to encourage private sector participation in cultural industries through facilitating bank loans, endowments and donations to culture producers;
d. that multipurpose miniature auditoriums should be constructed in each Local government area of the country;
e. that task forces should be set up to promote cultural industries and should be constituted by the following broad groups of persons:
i. Culture administrators
ii. Culture producers
iii. Business/Management Consultants
e. that private television stations should be allowed to be established and that they should be regulated through a bi- partisan mechanism;
f. that greater use should be made of programme exchange arrangements either as part of cultural agreements or through specialised organizations;
h. that Nigerian service clubs and non-governmental organizations should be encouraged to promote Nigerian culture abroad through cooperation with public cultural institutions;
i. that the teaching of handcrafts, music, fine arts in schools should be promoted with appropriately reviewed curricula;

j. that cultural festivals should be encouraged at national, state and local government levels;

k. that hospitable climate should be created to encourage private investments (both local and foreign) in cultural industries;

l. that parents should be educated on the advantages of educating their young children within their cultural milieu rather than sending them at too tender an age to be raised within an alien cultural environment;

m. that cultural environment and cultural diplomacy should be targeted to stimulate economic growth and to benefit our cultural industries through cultivating taste for Nigerian artefacts and fashion in other countries, especially in those of Black diaspora;

n. that in order to create greater public commitment to and interest in Nigeria television programmes, especially in the era of competing visual material from foreign stations, greater national encouragement should be given to local producers to ensure the creation of high quality television programmes;

o. that literature syllabi in our educational institutions should be reviewed to encourage use of materials from other African countries, Caribbean, Latin American and fasten the reading of writers whose views promote values which are acceptable to us;

p. that the critical role of the press and media as instruments of cultural promotion both domestically and internationally should be supported;

g. that attempts should be made to recreate for the younger generation the effects of moonlight story-telling whereby much folklore and local history are disseminated throughout the population.

CULTURAL IDENTITY AND NATIONALISM

The dialogue noted and appreciated the rate at which the world is fast becoming a global village. It observed that given the geo- political

responsibilities of Nigeria in and around Africa and the black world, it was important that the country should avoid cultural isolationism. This issue has a special significance given the temptations and allure of cultural chauvinism or cultural nationalism. It was agreed that because of the modicum of common traits which exist among the black communities throughout the world. Nigeria must define its role as one of leadership is asserting the rights of all africans and peoples of african descent to enhance our common cultural heritage.

Consequently, Nigeria must see to it that these common cultural trails are reinforced, encouraged and promoted. It must position itself to explore the cultural resources of other black societies and to identify within them residual elements of those common cultural strands which could then be fused together and used to enhance the evolution of an authentic and modern African culture. Although African integration need to start from the cultural realm, it was recognised that much of the successes to be achieved in this direction would depend on the extent to which African nations control the economies of their various countries.

A conducive international environment is also regarded as critical for the evolution of an integrated African culture. In other words, the logic of global development must inform and propel the process of our cultural evolution. The establishment of the Organisation of African Unity some twenty-seven years ago provides a framework within which such cultural evolution can be promoted. Although this organsation has hardly justified all the expectations of Africans, it was the view of participants that Nigeria should be more active in enhancing the capacity of the OAU to foster regional cooperation over a broad front including the cultural.

In addition, participants were of the view that Nigeria should spare no effort in articulating and projecting African values and culture

through the activities of regional and continental organisations such as Economic Community of West African State and the Organisation of African Unity.

ANNEXURE I

List of Participants

1. General Olusegun Obasanjo, former Head of State of Nigeria.
2. Prof. Saburi Biobaku, P.O.Box 7741, Lagos.
3. Prof. Akin L. Mabogunje, 13, Oba Olagbegi Rd, Bodija, Ibadan.
4. Prof. Ojetunji Aboyade, PAI Associates 25, Osuntokun Avenue, Bodija, Ibadan.
5. Prof. Oyeleye Oyediran, Dept. of Political Science University of Lagos Akoka, Lagos.
6. Alfred E. Opubor, Multimedia Ltd. 35, Oluwu Street, Ikeja.
7. Mr. D.T. Orjiako, Nigerian Media Council, Iganmu, Lagos.
8. Chinel Aihebe Heineman Ibadan.
9. Mahdi Adamu, Centre for Trans-Sahara Studies, University of Maiduguri.
10. Jonathan Ishaku, Champion Newspapers Ltd. Lagos.
11. Dr. Y.M. Maiangwa, Director, Africa Leadership Forum, Ota.
12. Mr. Eluem Emeka Izeze, Editor Sunday Guardian, Rutam House Lagos.
13. Frank Aig-Imoukhuede, Federal Department of Culture National Theatre, Iganmu, Lagos.
14. Hajiya Habibat Abubakar, Habilad Enterprises, Kano (NCWS) P.O.Box 2086, Kano.
15. Sule Bello, National Council for Arts & Culture, Iganmu, Lagos.
16. Mrs. Mariam L. Yunusa, Federal Government Girls College, Yola.
17. Segun Omolayo, Wemy Industries Ltd, Lagos.
18. Sebastine Ofurum, Up & Up Agencies, 15 Sobo Siffre Road Mende, Maryland, P.O.Box 4625, Marina, Lagos.

19. M.A. Johnson, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos.
20. Muyiwa Bamgbose, Nigeria Junior Chamber, P.O.Box 3304, Ibadan.
21. Ibi Sofekun, (President) Nigeria Junior Chamber. P.O.Box 2984, Ikeja.
22. Femi Badejo, University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos.
23. Sina Odugbemi, Grav Bas Inblishments Ltd. P.O.Box 73180 Victoria Island, Lagos.
24. Sonala Olumhense, C/O Editorial Board, Daily Times, Agidingbi Road, Ikeja.
25. Mr. Aihehe, Jericho, Ibadan.
26. Nyaknno Osso, Newswatch, 62 Oregun Rd. Ikeja, Lagos.
27. T.M. Salisu, University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos.
28. Nnimmo Bassey, University of Benin, Benin City.
29. Tunde Akogun, 4A Iru Close off Queen's drive Ikoyi, Lagos.
30. Festus Iyayi, P.O.Box 8565, Benin City, Bendel State.
31. Ayodele Aderinwale, Africa Leadership Forum, Ota.

ANNEXURE II

Opening Remarks

By:
General Olusegun Obasanjo

I welcome you all to the Farm House Dialogue, the 8th in our Development series. Over the next two days our focus again would be on yet another crucible of the development process; culture as it relates to and affects development process. Culture for me connotes the totality of the way of life and living of a people. It informs and shapes their attitude and disposition.

Part of our task this weekend as we trade views and exchange ideas revolve around identifying those aspects of our culture that are consensually denoted as being dysfunctional to development, while I believe that those aspects that are ordianrily deemed and taken as eufunctional to development need to be queried, examined critically, assesed and possibly ammended as deemed fit.

We must accept that as a nation and as a people we cannot honestly expect to pick up the gaunlet of development challenges of the twentieth century with the attitude, belief, mental dispostion and pre-delection of a stone age era. What is essential is the need for us to examine and possibly identify the common strands that would enable us characterize the Nigerian with a view to ascertaining with clarity those elements that are basically Nigerian.

I challenge all of us here this week end to pick up this yeoman's job with the earnestness it deserves. Since the introduction of the Farm House Dialogue on the Development Series, Culture has remained a recurrent issue throughout the trends of dicussions in the earlier Seven Dialogues; it is no doubt one of the strongest indications of the centrality of the subject to the development question. How we handle the

issue of culture, I believe, would have significant and far reaching implications for our effective management of the development process.

Let me say that it is not enough for us to romanticize in nostalgia with the "glorious past" and lament the erosion of past sacrosanct values, we must realize and accept that the world is changing and at a somewhat frenetic pace. The configuration of forces does not allow us the hitherto luxury of lamentation. I do agree that colonialism and modernisation are two forces that create antinomies of cultural disarticulation and disorientation.

But it is incumbent upon us to move from the era of diagnosis to the cure. The first two decades of our independence have been spent diagnosing and lamenting our woes. Now is the time to anchor our precepts in the sea of positive reinforcement if our adaptness to the reality of our efforts at changing our life chances as a people must have meaning.

I believe that culture is a dynamic phenomenon and when it becomes static, then stagnation sets in, the rot begins and we cannot within such a scenario possibly talk of embracing, undertaking and confronting headlong the challenges of development.

What remains crucial for us is to identify how we can root our development in our culture. Culture is a way of life, and if development is to enjoy a mass approach and be popularly embraced, it must be pursued as a way of life. A culture informed and induced development process is an easier task compared to a process that is absracted from the mainstream of the people's thoughts, attitude, disposition and behavioural processes.

What aspects of our common collective consciousness, our culture, need to be reinforced, augmented, refined, re-defined and re- directed

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What remains crucial for us is to identify how we can root our development in our culture. Culture is a way of life, and if development is to enjoy a mass approach and be popularly embraced, it must be pursued as a way of life. A culture informed and induced development process is an easier task compared to a process that is absracted from the mainstream of the people's thoughts, attitude, disposition and behavioural processes.

What aspects of our common collective consciousness, our culture, need to be reinforced, augmented, refined, re-defined and re- directed

to aid our development process? Nigerians are for instance, said to be assertive, resilient ingeneous and audacious as a people and as a nation. These no doubt are good attributes of humankind. Similarly, I believe that there is no ethnic group in Nigeria whose culture encourages those who do not work to live in indolence and eat off the sweat of the rest of the community. Nor is there any aspect of the various sub-cultures that has congealed into the Nigerian culture, that extols pilfering as a virtue. How then is it that we have come to accept these anti- development idiosyncracies as a norm? How come that we have turned normal hospitality and expression of gratitude into extolling of bribery and corruption? But perhaps the bigger and more knotty and certainly more challenging question is, how might we utilise the positive virtues and aspects of our culture in the effective management of our resources such that our attempts at development would be more meaningful, more concrete, and more effective?

I believe that our individual tasks must start from the basic social unit, the family cell. For far too long, most of us, in our individual attempts to keep up with the "Joneses", have thrown decorum, decency, morality and cultural inhibitions with futuristic implications overboard. We have harangued and allowed ourselves to be bullied into accepting the status consciousness and symbols as a major pre-occupation and in the process we have largely socialised our children and our young ones into an inverted culture.

Some of our stabilising factors at the familial level need to be rekindled to bring back the blunting and blurring balms of our social existence. For sometime, the extended family system has taken the sting away from the biting effects of modernisation. That to my mind is a good cultural value that must be rekindled, renergized and re-invigorated to ensure that part of our human resources is not lost to the wild oats of society.

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In a similar vein some of our traditional intstruments of governance are more accessible and basically integratable into the main stream of our modern setting. It is only in this sense that we can hopefully reproduce and effectively sensitise positive aspects of our culture to the sensibilities of the younger generation. Tools and equipment must be people based, people designed, people oriented and dependent on the skills of the user if we are to hopefully maximize its usage. Thus whatever is designed has to be culturally inspired and induced. The most significant aspect of our culture is caring and sharing. It propels, edifies and consolidate the society. Each of us has a stake in providing infants and young children, wherever they may live within the society, adequate nutritional and emotional nurturing that allow them a decent start in life, because if we do not, they will burden us for decades with the costs of illness, dependency and crime. We all have a stake in helping adolescents and young adults from school to the increasingly demanding work force of our age. All of us must show interest in job-absorption and retraining of workers who are left behind by the changing economic tide so that they will not be condemned to unproductive, dependent and criminal lives which we all have to pay for. We all find personal reassurance in providing the elderly with freedom from the fear of infirmity devastating their health, emotional underpinnings and loneliness and neglect. Apart from enlightened self-interest caring and sharing is a moral responsibility. The moral integrity of our society depends to a great extent upon our ability to unite behind and by this belief.

Let me seize this opportunity to thank our chairman Prof. Saburi Biobaku who inspite of our rather short notice was able to honour our humble invitation to share his experience and wisdom with us. While saying a big thank you to him I would like to remind you all of the free, frank spontaneous and recommendatory nature of the Farm House Dialogue and I wish you a fruitful discussion.

Thank you.

ANNEXURE III

Chairman's Opening Address

By:
Professor Saburi Biobaku

The Chairman of the Africa Leadership Forum etc.

I think I should start by expressing my great pleasure at partipating in the 8th Farm House Dialogue of the Africa Leadership Forum taking place this week-end here in Ota. Our former Head of state and our Chief host has converted his famous farm into a veritable *CAMP DAVID* OR *CHECKERS* in the United States of America and Great Britain respectively. Instead of communting with visiting Heads of state as President Bush might do in holding important inner cabinets as Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher might do, he has invited us (and others before us) to hold a Dialogue on an important national issue, Culture and Development He has assembled a carefully selected group of knowledgeable men and women, adroitly balanced as to profession, discipline and age, making sure that the young and the mature and experience would inter-act to our mutual benefit. I am sure we are all grateful to our great host and applaud his efforts to ensure that through Dialogues, we examine together in relaxed atmosphere on the farm; through discussions we understand some of our national problems of which we are all a part and thereby ensure that we all become a part of the solution to those problems. We exchange views freely on our subject and may be, arrive at conclusions which if they reach the ears of those who formulate national policies and make decisions they will certainly enrich the submissions of their official advisers. Ours is therefore a privilege and an opportunity of which I am sure we are all grateful.

Our topic this week-end is Culture and Development. I have circulated some notes of a recent lecture which I gave to some young persons on the subject, I hope those who have read the notes would concede that if I had had a longer notice I would have produced a more profound paper. As it happens, however, I think the Noks have pointed out some of the leads which we can have for our discussion. We need to define Culture; will professor Sofola's suggestion give us a good state. Culture is "a learned pattern of behaviour, ideas, beliefs and the arterfacts shared as a people and socially transmitted from one generation to another" Thus we have cultural heritage.

On DEVELOPMENT, we should concentrate on the problems of a developing country; eradicating ignorance, poverty and disease as well as shedding our status as producers of raw materials mainly and joining the society of manufacters: We need to modernise our economy but should we do this at the expense of our cultural development. In Nigeria, should we not be mindful that we have a common cultural heritage and that we can in fact, achieve Unity within our Diversity.

We can dwell a little on various facets of our culture. In Art, it has been scientifically established that there is a continuum of sculptural excellence, starting from Nok through Igbo, Uku, Ife, Owo and Benin of at least 2000 years. Similarly in other forms of Art and Thought there is a strong indication of common norms, common standards of behavior and indeed a common heritage. We can draw unifying examples from our Dances, Music, Drama, Architecture and Language with its ancillary of folk-lore.

We can ask ourselves the question, whether the maintenance and development of our culture is relevant to our national development? My own answer is Yes. But are we doing enough in this regard? One is happy that we now have a Ministry of Culture and Social Welfare

which indicates that our government is placing the right emphasis on cultural development. There is also a cultural policy which was recently officially launched. But is our government really doing enough; the Department of Culture, the Council of Arts and Culture, the Museums and Monuments Commission and other government agencies for the preservation and propagation of our Culture, do they have enough funds to discharge their obligations? We can discuss the rationale of a National Troupe, annual All-Nigeria Cultural Festivals and see whether we are really spreading the gospel of Culture amongst all our peoples. We often see school children in cultural displays to entertain guests at state functions, is that enough? should we not teach culture in our schools and colleges?

I am sure we shall not be short of issues to discuss in this Dialogue on Culture and Development. It is important that we should do this for in our justifiable desire to enter the technological age and engage in essential modernization - to study science, mathematics and the latest in computer technology - we need to under-pin our development with a proper appreciation of our culture. We need cultural identity as Nigerians and Africans and through the development of our culture we have an excellent opportunity to contribute to the amalgam of world culture, which is *CIVILIZATION*. Above all, we must always remember that "human beings are not birds; we cannot fly but are deeply rooted in the soil from which we sprung".

We need to develop, defend and propagate our culture if our aspiration for modernization will not be lop-sided.

Members of the Dialogue on Culture and Development, I think I have said enough to get our discussion started.

Thank you all for your attention.

BACKGROUND NOTE ON THE AFRICA LEADERSHIP FORUM

Despite over a quarter of a century of political independence, Africa's aspirations and hopes remain today largely unfulfilled. This has not been, however, a period of unmitigated failure in the history of the continent; there have been successes in education, public health, import substitution industries, and in the continuing process of decolonization. The problems of development, peace and security, the health of the world economy, and improving the environment are interrelated global issues; they do not admit of piecemeal solutions.

And yet all countries find that in the absence of true global cooperation, they have to tackle particular aspects of them. At the national level in Africa, the inadequacy of information, data, and resources render the problems daunting. Regionally they are overwhelming.

African leaders have frequently come to their positions with limited experience. Though most of them have battled on, confronting their awesome problems of development and nation- building essentially not only unprepared but unaided, their efforts have been at best only a qualified success.

Africa cannot afford to continue with ill-prepared and unassisted leaders. Those on whom the burden of leadership will fall in future must fully comprehend their responsibilities, duties, and obligations. They must, that is, have exposure and carefully planned preparation if they are to meet the challenges that will face them.

The leaders of tomorrow, however, today have to be pursuing their professional careers. They have little time to devote to gaining a comprehensive knowledge of their own countries and their region, nor of the cultures of their diverse peoples. Nor even to learning about and

understanding the actions taken by their present leaders where they do not impinge on their own areas of expertise.

Most young potential leaders have focused primarily on single issues,lacking time to look at wider, critical regional and world challenges. Time for comprehensive study and reflection, for sharing experiences with persons inside, let alone outside, their countries, region, and field of concentration is very limited. Opportunities for such detached discussion and contemplation are even rarer.

There are no private institutions in Africa devoted to preparing potential leaders with a global outlook, leaders who will be able to cooperate within and across national, regional, and institutional boundaries. Further, it is difficult, if not impossible, in many African countries to gain access to relevant and timely information on most national, regional, and global issues.

Experience in and out of Government and in international fora bears out this situation, one which poses a challenge to address and remedy. One solution is to hold periodically the "Africa Leadership Forum" - a series which may be national, subregional, regional and international in dimension and may vary in duration. Their purpose will be to enhance the knowledge and awareness of young, potential African leaders, placing special emphasis on diagnosing apparent failures of the past; on understanding multiple dimensions and complex interrelations of local, national, regional, and global problems; and on seeking possible approaches to solutions.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Forum is to encourage diagnosis, understanding, and an informed search for solutions to local, regional and

global problems, taking full account of their interrelationships and mutual consequences.

To that end, the Forum will develop, organize and support programmes for the training of young and promising Africans with leadership potential so as to expose them to the demands, duties and obligations of leadership positions and to prepare them systematically for assuming higher responsibilities and meeting the challenges of an interdependent world.

The Forum will also endeavour to generate greater understanding and enhance the knowledge and awareness of development and social problems within a global context among young, potential leaders from all sectors of society, cutting across national, regional, continental, professional and institutional borders. This may foster close and enduring relationships among participants, relationships promoting life-long association and cooperation.

Further, the Forum will support and encourage the diagnosis and informed search for appropriate and effective solutions to local and regional Africal problems and to global problems from an African perspective - within the framework of global interdependence -, including conideration of phased action programmes that can be initiated by various countries, sub- regions and institutions.

In addition, there will be specific weekend seminars organized as Farm House Dialogues to be held quarterly. The first of the Dialogues entitled "Leadership for Development" was held on 13-14 May 1988.